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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6625  
INFO RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 0694  
RUEHAS/AMEMBASSY ALGIERS 0721  
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RUEHBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK 0263  
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SUBJECT: FRANCE UNDERSTANDS NEED TO EXTEND CWC DESTRUCTION  
DEADLINE, CONCERNED THAT IT MAY GIVE OTHERS A "PRETEXT" FOR  
NONCOMPLIANCE

REF: SECSTATE 62850

Classified By: Acting Political Minister-Counselor Bruce Turner for rea  
sons 1.4(b) and (d).

1. (C) Reftel points were delivered to French MFA Director  
for chemical and biological weapons disarmament issues,  
Arnaud Roux, and desk officer, Etienne Sur. In follow up  
discussions April 24, Sur said that the French were well

aware of the issue. He said that the GoF appreciated U.S. efforts to be transparent in dealing with the sensitive issue of pushing back the destruction deadline, as well as U.S. candor in acknowledging that it was unlikely to meet the final deadline. He added that the GoF fully understood the practical issues behind extending the deadline, and that it had no difficulty with them.

12. (C) Sur said the GoF was nonetheless concerned about the example the U.S. extension (and subsequent non-compliance if the 2012 deadline was not met) would set for less-responsible countries that were obligated to destroy their own chemical weapons stockpiles. He said the GoF feared that other countries might use the U.S.'s inability to comply, especially after the 2012 deadline was passed, as a pretext to avoid destroying their own chemical weapons, possibly for reasons more nefarious than concerns over public safety.

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Stapleton